

Public Comment
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Subject: My Public Comment

Comments/Questions for the National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic and Other Populations (NAC) submitted by Deborah Weinstein, Executive Director, Coalition on Human Needs, May 7, 2021

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Household Pulse Survey and the need for an ongoing focus at the Census Bureau on improving the accuracy of the count of children, especially the youngest children.

I want to emphasize how vitally important the Household Pulse Survey has been for the hundreds of thousands reached by the Coalition on Human Needs. We include organizations concerned with poverty, work supports including child care, food and housing security, health care and education. We use Household Pulse data regularly in a biweekly publication we do called [COVID-19 Watch: Tracking Hardship](#). We have also helped state advocates to make use of the state data. **We strongly recommend that the Household Pulse survey is continued indefinitely**, since we know that households with low incomes take the longest to recover from economic downturns and it will be extremely important to track the impact of changing assistance such as the Child Tax Credit, SNAP and child nutrition increases and housing assistance on households.

We are very pleased that the Census Bureau has added questions specifically related to child care and health care for children, and that questions about children's access to live teachers in real time have been improved. The Household Pulse data regarding children has been somewhat difficult to use. In particular, **we would encourage the Census Bureau to look at ways to simplify and clarify the food insufficiency data about children**. The data in Food Table 5 do show children who do not have enough to eat in households that cannot afford enough food (over 9 million in week 28), but the data do not make it easy to show what proportion that is of all children. It would be **useful if it is possible to show age breakdowns for children**, since the youngest children's development is particularly threatened by inadequate nutrition and other hardships.

We would encourage you to **consider adding housing questions that ask if renters have been forced to leave their housing because of inability to pay rent**. Even with an eviction moratorium, landlords can apply pressure to force tenants out, so we would not recommend limiting your question to those who had been evicted.

We appreciate that you have deleted questions that no longer appear useful, and would encourage you to do more of that, since survey length may be causing people not to answer questions later in the survey.

Finally, **we support the request to designate a Census Bureau senior staff person to oversee efforts for accurate counting of children, especially young children**, in all Census surveys and the 2030 Census, who would communicate with outside children's data users to improve understanding of problems and potential solutions.